

Message Text

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43

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 CIEP-01 FAA-00 MCT-01 SY-05

SS-15 L-03 NSC-05 IO-13 TRSE-00 /072 W

----- 119196

R 141741Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6612

INFO COMICEDEFOR

CINCLANT

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USNATO 1477

CONFIDENTIAL REYKJAVIK 1222

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, PINS, IC

SUBJECT: HIJACKING POST-MORTEM

REF: REYKJAVIK 1221 (NOTAL)

1. LANDING OF HIJACKED TWO AIRCRAFT AT KEFLAVIK CONSISTED OF ICELAND'S MOST IMPORTANT NEWS HAPPENING OF SUMMER. MEDIA ATTENTION WAS INTENSE, AS BOTH NEWSPAPERS AND RADIO, IN RARE DEPARTURE FROM CUSTOM, PROVIDED SPECIAL COVERAGE OF HIJACKING.

2. OFFICIALS APPEAR PLEASED WITH WAY INCIDENT WAS HANDLED HERE, BOTH BY LITTLE-KNOWN GOI "HIJACKING COMMITTEE" AND BY AIRPORT GROUND PERSONNEL. THERE HAS, HOWEVER, BEEN CONCERN EXPRESSED BY AT LEAST TWO NEWSPAPER COLUMNISTS OVER POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF GOI'S COMPLIANCE WITH HIJACKERS' DEMANDS WHILE PLANE WAS AT KEFLAVIK. JOURNALISTS MAINTAIN THIS COULD GIVE ICELAND REPUTATION AS HOSPITABLE REFUGE FOR TERRORISTS. ASSESSING INCIDENT FROM DIFFERENT STANDPOINT, INDEPENDENCE PARTY'S DAILY MORGUNBLADID SEPT 14 SAID HIJACKING DEMONSTRATED
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NEED FOR PRESENCE HERE OF US-MANNED DEFENSE FORCE, WITHOUT

WHICH ICELAND WOULD BE AT MERCY OF TERRORISTS. PROGRESSIVE PARTY CHAIRMAN AND ACTING FONMIN OLAFUR JOHANNESSON ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED ROLE OF DEFENSE FORCE, POINTING OUT IN INTERVIEW THAT IF INCIDENT HAD OCCURRED AT AIRPORT OTHER THAN KEFLAVIK, GOI WOULD NOT HAVE ENJOYED HELP OF IDF.

3. DURING SEPTEMBER 13 MEETING OF EMBOFF WITH ICELANDIC COMMITTEE ON AIRPORT SECURITY TO DISCUSS PASSENGER SECURITY (PER STATE 212490 AND REPORTED REFTEL, ICELANDERS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN ANY REPORT USG MAY PREPARE ON JIJACKING. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS PASSENGER SCREENING IN NEW YORK.

4. DISCUSSION OF HIJACKING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS WILL DOUBTLESS CONTINUE INSIDE GOI, IN PRESS, AND AMONG ICELANDERS GENERALLY. IN MEANTIME, COUNTRY IS AT LEAST AWARE THAT SUCH HITHERTO REMOTE INCIDENTS CAN HAPPEN HERE AND THIS MAY HAVE SALUTARY EFFECT IN REMINDING ICELANDERS REAL WORLD EXTENDS BEYOND 200-MILE LIMIT. TO THAT END, EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ANY STATE OR OTHER AGENCY WRAP-UP OF HIJACKING SHOULD ONE BE PREPARED, THAT COULD BE PASSED ON TO APPROPRIATE ICELANDIC OFFICIALS. BLAKE

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Message Attributes

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